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STATE-TRIBAL COLLABORATION ACT REPORT



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MESSAGE FROM THE CABINET SECRETARY AND ASSISTANT SECRETARY



The State-Tribal Collaboration Act (STCA) establishes a clear responsibility for state agencies to maintain effective government-to-government relationships with the Nations, Pueblos, and Tribes (NPTs) of New Mexico. For the Early Childhood Education and Care Department (ECECD), this included consistent consultation, ongoing communication, effective collaboration, and strong accountability across the programs, policies, funding decisions, and initiatives that impact Native children, families, and communities.

In Fiscal Year 2026, ECECD continued to strengthen its engagement with NPTs through 18 consultations, facilitated monthly communication forums, regular meetings of the New Mexico Early Childhood Tribal Advisory Coalition, and direct engagement with Tribal leadership and early childhood programs. ECECD also made significant investments across child care assistance, Tribal PreK, home visiting, capital outlay, and Tribal Investment Strategy. Approximately \$36.16 million was allocated to programs, services, infrastructure, and priorities benefiting Native children, families, and Tribal communities.

As ECECD moves into Fiscal Year 2027, the Department remains committed to fulfilling its responsibilities under the State-Tribal Collaboration Act and strengthening government-to-government collaboration across New Mexico's early childhood system. This work requires continued engagement, transparency, responsiveness, and accountability from the Department as we work with NPTs to address current priorities and advance opportunities for Native children and their families.

This report documents the Department's progress and activities under STCA and reflects ongoing work to strengthen communications and collaboration. We appreciate the continued engagement of Tribal leaders, early childhood professionals, educators, families, and partners who contribute to this work and help inform and improve ECECD's efforts throughout the state.

Elizabeth Groginsky
Cabinet Secretary
New Mexico Early
Childhood Education
and Care Department

Dr. Joannie Suina
Assistant Secretary for Native
American Early Education and Care
New Mexico Early Childhood
Education and Care Department

AGENCY OVERVIEW

Family Support and Early Intervention

The Family Support and Early Intervention Division provides culturally grounded early childhood support for families and young children, including home visiting, early intervention, and perinatal case management services.

Early Care, Education, and Nutrition

The Early Care, Education and Nutrition Division ensures New Mexicans have access to high quality, healthy, safe and supportive early childhood education environments and well as access to healthy meals.

Policy, Research, and Quality Initiatives

The Policy, Research and Quality Initiatives Division oversees the early childhood education and care department's policy, family and community engagement, and quality initiatives, including workforce development, coaching and consultation, infant early childhood mental health consultation. The division is also responsible for data analysis, reporting, and performance.

New Mexico PreK

NM PreK provides access to a high-quality, mixed-delivery early childhood education system. The program oversees the administration, monitoring, quality supports, and technical assistance for NM PreK in public schools, charter schools, community-based, and tribally-led programs. In collaboration with the Public Education Department, the program administers NM PreK funding and ensures all NM PreK children with special education needs receive the services and supports they need.

STATUTORY DEFINITIONS

The Early Childhood Education and Care Department Act of 2019 mandated the appointment of an Assistant Secretary for Native American Early Education and Care, making ECECD the first agency in the nation to have a dedicated position to strengthen government-to-government relationships related to prenatal-to-age-5 programs and services NMSA 1978, § 9-29-3(B).

Key Duties of the Assistant Secretary:

- Provide administration, coordination, and oversight of Indian early childhood education
- Collaborate with state and federal partners and agencies, Tribal government, eligible providers, and community partners
- Consult with Nations, Pueblos, and Tribes on delivery of learning guidelines in language, culture, and history designed for Tribal and non-Tribal students
- Assist school districts and educational agencies to expand appropriate Indian education programs for infants, toddlers, children, youth, and families pursuant to Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA)
- Seek funding to establish and strengthen programs related to infants, toddlers, children, youth, and families
- Ensure that language and cultural considerations are included in programs administered through the department





OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY *FY 26 SUMMARY*



Fiscal Year 2026 marked a foundational year for the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Native American Early Education and Care (OAS) within the New Mexico Early Childhood Education and Care Department (ECECD). Guided by Tribal sovereignty, government-to-government partnership, and culturally grounded early childhood systems, OAS worked alongside New Mexico's Nations, Pueblos, and Tribes to strengthen relationships, expand investments, and support Native children, families, and communities.

Throughout the year, OAS engaged Tribal leaders, educators, and early childhood professionals through Tribal consultations, recurring communication forums, community visits, and collaborative planning that informed priorities and strengthened tribal-led early childhood systems.

Key accomplishments included expanding Tribal investments through Intergovernmental Agreements, supporting Tribal NM PreK and Home Visiting programs, advancing Indigenous language revitalization, strengthening cross-agency collaboration, and securing a legislative appropriation for the inaugural Sacred Roots, Sovereign Futures statewide convening. This report highlights the partnerships, achievements, and collective progress made during FY26 while reaffirming OAS's commitment to Native children, families, and future generations.

FY26 Year in Review *Monthly Highlights*

- **July 2025:** Established statewide Tribal engagement priorities and expanded recurring communication.
- **August 2025:** Presented to HHS Committee and advanced Tribal Investment Strategy planning.
- **September 2025:** Provided outreach and legislative engagement on Universal Child Care.
- **October 2025:** Strengthened government-to-government partnerships and consultation.
- **November 2025:** Conducted consultations focused on infrastructure, workforce, and family supports.
- **December 2025:** Celebrated Kewa Pueblo Child Care Center ribbon cutting.
- **February 2026:** Continued formal consultations with Tribal leadership.
- **March 2026:** Supported Tribal Investment Strategy and Capital Outlay implementation.
- **April 2026:** Advanced Indigenous data, research, and language revitalization planning efforts for FY27.
- **May 2026:** Expanded NMECTAC partnership and collaboration with Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs).
- **June 2026:** Concluded FY26 with NMECTAC leadership, statewide planning, and continued investments.

Sacred Roots, Sovereign Futures

Designed as more than a conference, Sacred Roots, Sovereign Futures a long-term platform for Indigenous knowledge sharing, workforce development, language revitalization, Tribal data governance, systems innovation, and strengthened partnerships across New Mexico.

COMMUNICATION AND COLLABORATION

The Office of the Assistant Secretary for Native American Early Education and Care (OAS) is committed to maintaining meaningful, transparent, and consistent communication with the Nations, Pueblos, and Tribes (NPTs) of New Mexico. Recognizing that strong government-to-government relationships are built through ongoing dialogue, OAS coordinates multiple communication forums throughout the year to share information, elevate Tribal priorities, foster collaboration, and strengthen partnerships across early childhood systems.

These communication efforts provide opportunities for Tribal leadership, early childhood professionals, educators, and agency partners to receive timely updates on ECECD initiatives, discuss emerging issues, exchange promising practices, and inform the development of policies and programs that impact Native children, families, and communities.

Throughout Fiscal Year 2026, the Office of the Assistant Secretary coordinated and supported the following recurring communication opportunities:

- Monthly OAS Communication Calls
- Monthly Tribal Education Director Calls
- ECECD Tribal Liaison Calls
- Bi-Monthly Indian Education Advisory Council Meetings
- Convened regular virtual and in-person NMECTAC meetings to strengthen collaboration, share resources, provide professional development, and elevate Tribal priorities.

Looking ahead to Fiscal Year 2027, OAS will also convene Sacred Roots, Sovereign Futures Planning meetings to guide statewide collaboration.

Together, these communication efforts strengthen government-to-government relationships, encourage shared learning, and ensure that the voices of the Nations, Pueblos, and Tribes of New Mexico remain central to the development, implementation, and continuous improvement of ECECD programs and services.



Photo: Early Childhood Day with Ohkay Owingeh Tribal Leaders and the youth dancers, honoring the late Ohkay Owingeh Councilman, Peter Garcia Jr. on February 14, 2026 in Santa Fe, New Mexico.



Photo: Tribal Consultation with Jicarilla Apache Leadership in November 2025.



Photo: New Mexico Early Childhood Tribal Advisory Coalition Meeting, April 22, 2026 hosted inside the Santo Domingo Early Childhood Learning Center.



Photo: Sandia Child Development Center Ribbon cutting, October 24, 2025 at the Pueblo of Sandia.

NEW MEXICO EARLY CHILDHOOD TRIBAL ADVISORY COALITION



Strengthening Tribal Leadership Through Collaboration

The New Mexico Early Childhood Tribal Advisory Coalition (NMECTAC) continued to serve as a cornerstone of government-to-government collaboration throughout Fiscal Year 2026. Established in 2022, NMECTAC provides a structured forum for Tribal early childhood leaders, educators, program administrators, community partners, and ECECD staff to strengthen relationships, share promising practices, identify emerging challenges, and develop recommendations that inform the department's work with the Nations, Pueblos, and Tribes of New Mexico.

Guided by the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Native American Early Education and Care (OAS), NMECTAC convened monthly through a combination of virtual and community-hosted in-person meetings. This hybrid model strengthened statewide participation while allowing coalition members to experience the unique strengths, cultures, and early childhood systems of host Tribal communities firsthand. Each meeting provided opportunities for relationship-building, professional development, policy discussion, collaborative problem-solving, and peer learning among Tribal early childhood professionals.

Unlike a traditional advisory committee, NMECTAC emphasizes reciprocal learning and community engagement. Meetings are intentionally hosted within Tribal communities whenever possible, allowing participants to learn directly from local early childhood programs, language revitalization efforts, innovative family engagement strategies, and culturally grounded educational practices.



Photo: New Mexico Early Childhood Tribal Advisory Coalition, June 26, 2026 in Santa Fe, New Mexico.

NMECTAC emphasizes reciprocal learning and community engagement

New Mexico Tribal Advisory Coalition

In FY26, NMECTAC expanded representation from the NPTs and strengthened partnerships with statewide organizations supporting Native children, families, and educators.

- **Pueblo of Acoma**, Cassandra Sanchez
- **Pueblo of Isleta**, Andrea Pesina
- **Pueblo of Jemez**, Mavie Armijo
- **Jicarilla Apache Nation**, Tammy Salazar
- **Mescalero Apache Nation**, Rosario Dick
- **Navajo Nation**, Vice President Richelle Montoya
- **Pueblo of Nambe**, Samantha Viarrial
- **Ohkay Owingeh**, Aileen Lopez
- **Pueblo of Pojoaque**, Beverly Fierro
- **Pueblo of Sandia**, Frankie Ortiz
- **Pueblo of Santa Clara**, Jeremy Oyenque
- **Kewa Pueblo**, Stan Cortiz
- **Pueblo of Taos**, Caitlin Lujan
- **Pueblo of Tesuque**, Paul Ortiz
- **Pueblo de San Ildefonso**, Hailey Gonzalas
- **Pueblo of Zia**, Jonathan Pino
- **Pueblo of Zuni**, Francine Cheama
- **Saad K'idilyé Diné Language Nest Program**, Warlance Chee
- **Keres Children's Learning Center**, Celeste Naranjo
- **Education for Parents of Indigenous Children with Special Needs (EPICS)**, Denise Yazzie
- **New Mexico School for the Blind and Visually Impaired**, Carla Gregory
- **New Mexico School for the Deaf**, Zelfa Sandoval-Sweeney

FY26 NMECTAC Meetings

NMECTAC hosted 10 meetings during Fiscal Year 2026 through both virtual and in-person gatherings across New Mexico. Meeting topics reflected priorities identified by coalition members and included Universal Child Care, Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA), Social and Emotional Early Development Initiative (SEED), Tribal Liaison engagement, Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Part B-619 Special Education Services, Tribal Center Safety, Infant Mental Health, and planning for the Sacred Roots, Sovereign Futures Convening.



Photo: New Mexico Early Childhood Tribal Advisory Coalition, January 2, 2026 in Cochiti, New Mexico.

FY26 NMECTAC Accomplishments

- | | | | | |
|---|--|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Strengthened trust and relationship-building through community-hosted meetings. | Expanded professional development opportunities during coalition meetings. | Increased participation of ECECD Tribal Liaisons. | Supported peer-to-peer sharing of Tribal early childhood practices. | Developed and distributed the FY26 NMECTAC Directory. |

Informing Statewide Policy

NMECTAC members identified recurring themes affecting Tribal early childhood systems, including workforce shortages, facilities, family engagement, language revitalization, funding, under-enrollment, food sovereignty, and access to specialized services. NMECTAC translated these discussions into practical recommendations intended to inform ECECD policy, technical assistance, and future investments.

Looking Ahead

In Fiscal Year 2027, NMECTAC will advance Tribal-led policy recommendations, support Indigenous data governance, and contribute to the planning of the Sacred Roots, Sovereign Futures Convening.

Tribal Early Childhood *Capital Investments*



Creating safe, culturally responsive, and sustainable learning environments is essential to supporting the healthy development of Native children and strengthening Tribal early childhood systems. Throughout Fiscal Year 2026, the Early Childhood Education and Care Department (ECECD) continued partnering with the Nations, Pueblos, and Tribes of New Mexico to advance capital investments that address facility needs identified through Tribal priorities and previous facility assessments.

Building upon comprehensive early childhood facility needs assessments conducted from 2021 - 2022, ECECD continued working collaboratively with Tribal governments to support planning, design, renovation, and construction of early childhood facilities through New Mexico's Infrastructure Capital Improvement Plan (ICIP) process. These investments are intended to improve access to high-quality learning environments while strengthening Tribal capacity to deliver culturally grounded early childhood education and care services for generations to come.

In Fiscal Year 2026, ECECD partnered with nine Tribal communities to advance planning and implementation of Tribal early childhood capital projects.

The following Tribal communities continued planning and implementation of capital investment projects during FY26:

- Pueblo of Acoma
- Pueblo de Cochiti – Keres Children's Learning Center
- Jicarilla Apache Nation
- Kewa Pueblo (Santo Domingo)
- Pueblo of Laguna
- Ohkay Owingeh Pueblo
- Pueblo of San Ildefonso
- Santa Clara Pueblo
- Pueblo of Tesuque

A significant milestone was celebrated during FY26 at the Pueblo de Cochiti, where the Keres Children's Learning Center successfully completed the expenditure of its capital funding and officially broke ground on its new early childhood facility on March 31, 2026. This milestone represents years of collaborative planning and reflects the Pueblo's continued investment in creating a permanent, culturally grounded learning environment for future generations of Keres children and families.

These capital investments represent more than facility improvements—they reflect a long-term commitment to strengthening Tribal early childhood infrastructure, supporting educational sovereignty, and ensuring that Native children have access to learning environments that honor their languages, cultures, and communities. ECECD remains committed to working alongside the Nations, Pueblos, and Tribes of New Mexico to identify infrastructure priorities and expand opportunities for future capital investments that strengthen early childhood systems across Tribal communities.

Tribal Investment Strategy



Tribal Investment Strategy Intergovernmental Agreements in FY26 totaled \$1,625,223.87 and supported the defined outcomes of Tribal communities by investing in Indigenous children in New Mexico.

- 1 Santa Clara Pueblo**
\$93,100: Education retention stipends
- 2 Acoma**
\$76,650: Semesterly wage incentive bonuses
- 3 San Felipe Pueblo**
\$101,755.37: Capacity building, programmatic support for cultural alignment, community engagement
- 4 Sandia Pueblo**
\$217,344: Cultural alignment in early intervention services, professional development
- 5 Jemez Pueblo**
\$585,671.58: Towa literacy strategies, professional development, UH-Hilo partnership
- 6 Mescalero Apache Tribe**
\$102,802.50: Early intervention, cultural integration
- 7 Pojoaque Pueblo**
\$88,600: School readiness, language, professional development
- 8 Isleta Pueblo**
\$105,000: Quality improvement, program access, cultural alignment, professional development
- 9 Zia Pueblo**
\$61,820: Facility access, professional development, community engagement
- 10 Ohkay Owingeh Pueblo**
\$78,000: Family engagement, educator stipends, language instruction
- 11 Navajo Technical University**
\$18,917.42: Early childhood lab school development
- 12 LANL Foundation**
\$95,563: Supporting three Pueblos in administering home visiting services

Additional Early Childhood Investments to Support Native American Early Education and Care:

UNM Native American Budget and Policy Institute – \$344,001 to support and facilitate NMECTAC and provide policy and data support to the Office of the Assistant Secretary.

THRIVE Community Building – \$60,000 to provide remote technical assistance and guidance to the Agency and the nine (9) Nation, Pueblos and Tribes who received capital outlay funding for improvements to their respective early childhood learning centers during the 2024 New Mexico Legislative Session.

Transcending Strategies – \$4,500 to provide professional, culturally responsive online webinar sessions for Tribal early childhood educators, leaders, and program staff that strengthen culturally responsive practice and honor Tribal sovereignty.



FY26 Tribal Outcome *Highlights:*



A Partnership Rooted in Language and Sovereignty

The Pueblo of Jemez and ECECD's shared commitment to Towa Language Revitalization

For generations, the Pueblo of Jemez has worked to protect and strengthen the Towa language, recognizing that language is inseparable from culture, identity, ceremony, and community well-being. Following community concern about declining numbers of fluent speakers, Tribal leadership committed to building a comprehensive language immersion pathway beginning in early childhood and extending through elementary education.

Through New Mexico's Preschool Development Grant Birth through Five (PDG B-5), the Early Childhood Education and Care Department (ECECD) partnered with the Pueblo of Jemez to advance Tribal language immersion. The partnership supported research, educator preparation, community engagement, and knowledge-sharing with other NPTs.

| Partnership Highlights

Strengthening Language Immersion

- Expanded oral-language instructional strategies designed specifically for an unwritten Indigenous language.
- Continued full language immersion from child care through the K-6 Hemish Language Immersion Pilot School.
- Increased opportunities for children and families to learn and use Towa in everyday life.

Sharing Knowledge Across Tribal Communities

- Hosted visits from Tribal leaders, educators, state agencies, higher education partners, and national Indigenous language programs.
- Participated in research exchanges and learning delegations in Hawai'i and Aotearoa (New Zealand).
- Supported other Nations, Pueblos, and Tribes interested in developing their own sovereign language immersion systems.

Building Indigenous Educator Pathways

- Strengthened the partnership with the University of Hawai'i at Hilo to develop one of the nation's first Tribal language immersion teacher preparation models.
- Six educators completed the inaugural Master's cohort in 2026 and are helping build the next generation of Native language teachers.
- Advanced planning for the launch of the Jemez Language Immersion Teacher Licensure Program.

Collective Reflections

Interviews with Jemez educators highlighted several consistent themes:

Successes

- Strong Tribal leadership and community commitment
- A fully implemented early childhood language immersion pathway
- Development of culturally grounded curriculum and teaching resources
- Growing educator pipeline rooted in Tribal knowledge
- Recognition of Jemez as a model for Indigenous language revitalization

Challenges

- Declining numbers of fluent speakers among younger generations
- Need for greater family and community language use outside the classroom
- Ongoing recruitment and preparation of fluent Native language educators
- Sustained investment needed to maintain momentum and prevent further language loss

Looking Forward

The evaluation affirmed that language revitalization is a long-term community effort extending beyond schools. Future priorities identified by Jemez educators include:

- Expanding educator preparation and mentorship
- Strengthening intergenerational language learning
- Increasing family and community engagement
- Creating additional opportunities for Tribes to learn from one another
- Continuing government-to-government partnerships that respect Tribal sovereignty and support Tribally defined language goals

Language revitalization succeeds when Tribal sovereignty, community leadership, intergenerational learning, and sustained partnership come together.

The Pueblo of Jemez demonstrates how Indigenous communities can design, lead, and strengthen language immersion systems that honor their own cultures, priorities, and futures.



Education Support, Tribal Engagement, *and Capacity Building*



Multilingual Early Childhood Career Pathways:

With funding from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, ECECD is co-creating a pathway for a multilingual certification on an Early Childhood Degree. Work groups were held to focus on coursework, sustainability, and equity. Now in its final year, the initiative supports the development of pathways within higher education to prepare more educators who are fluent in Indigenous languages. Three statewide convenings were held to engage stakeholders in shaping the direction of this work. Additionally, as of the end of FY26, ECECD has issued \$1,500 stipends to a total of 356 students to support bilingual and Indigenous students who are working toward an associate degree in early childhood; 49 of these recipients were students at Tribal Colleges and Universities.

Bilingual Certification Incentive:

In FY26, four Indigenous language teachers are receiving stipends to support their continued pursuit of an associate degree in early childhood education in the form of an annual stipend for early childhood educators holding bilingual certificate. These recipients include students from ECECD's partnerships with Tribal Colleges and Universities.

ECECD Scholarship:

ECECD offers a scholarship covering books and tuition for individuals working in early childhood settings and attending school. In FY26, 165 scholarships were awarded to Native American students.

PreK and Head Start Pay Parity:

ECECD's Pay Parity Program provide pay parity to early childhood educators who work as teachers or directors in a community-based or Tribal PreK or Head Start setting. The program is designed to recognize the experience of PreK and Head Start educators and provide pay comparable to educators with the same degrees and credentials working in a public-school setting. In FY26, 61 Native American early childhood educators were issued PreK, Head Start or Infant/Toddler classroom pay parity awards.

ECECD Wage Supplement Program:

The Wage Supplement Program provides education-based supplemental wages to early childhood educators who work with children from birth to age five as teachers, teacher's assistants, or licensed family child care providers. The program is education-based and includes ten incremental levels; the more education one attains, the more supplement one can receive. In FY26, 27 Wage Supplement Incentives were issued to Native American individuals for Supplemental Wages, which is 10% of all FY26 wage supplement recipients.



Tribal Consultations

(Tribal consultations in FY26)

- Pueblo of Jemez
- Jicarilla Apache Nation
- Pueblo of Laguna
- Mescalero Apache Nation x2
- Pueblo of Nambe
- Pueblo of Pojoaque
- Pueblo of Sandia x2
- Pueblo of Santa Clara
- Kewa Pueblo (Santo Domingo) x2
- Pueblo de San Ildefonso
- Pueblo of Tesuque
- Pueblo of Zia

STCA Training and Certification

ECECD values diversity, equity, and inclusion. Pursuant to the State-Tribal Collaboration Act, 77 ECECD staff members have completed the State Tribal Collaboration Act Cultural Competency Training in FY26. Overall, 96 supervisors and 289 employees have completed this training since 2021. Currently the agency sits just below 90 percent completion rate. This training is provided by the State Personnel Office with assistance from the Indian Affairs Department. The training supports:

- The promotion of effective communication and collaboration between state agencies and Nations, Pueblos, and Tribes;
- The development of positive state-Tribal government-to-government relations; and
- Cultural competency in providing effective services to American Indians or Alaska Natives. ECECD has prioritized the practice of including a land acknowledgement before meetings and formal presentations to honor, recognize, and respect Indigenous Peoples as traditional stewards of this land

Method ECECD Staff are Notified of STCA

Since July 1, 2020, the Cabinet Secretary has established meaningful ways of communication with staff. This includes quarterly all-staff hybrid meetings. These all-staff meetings provide opportunity to inform staff about Tribal collaboration in pursuant of STCA and investments made to support Tribal priorities. As we enter FY27 ECECD will continue to improve on methods to inform ECECD staff on STCA and will work with the New Mexico Indian Affairs Department to ensure the agency is in compliance with training to better serve the Tribes of New Mexico.

Photo: Sacred Beginnings Learning Tour hosted by the Pueblo of Sandia on June 16, 2026.



Current and Planned Program and Services



FY26 Accomplishments

Tribal Government License

- Zia Pueblo – Successfully secured a Tribal Government License on 12/01/2025 for the T'siya Enrichment Center. Enrolled families are now actively participating in UCC
- Nambe Pueblo – Met with ECECD in May 2026
- Pueblo of Pojoaque – Initial inquiry received February 2026
- Pueblo of Sandia – Ongoing communication since December 2025

ECECD License

(ECECD ensures health and safety):

- Navajo Technical University - A courtesy visit was conducted in July 2026. Minor adjustments are currently underway in preparation for an application submission.
- Zuni Public Schools - Expressed interest in licensing a child care center to support school staff.

Comprehensive Background Check MOUs

- Pueblo of Zuni
- Eight Northern Indian Pueblo Council
- San Felipe Pueblo

Child Care

Child care services ensure equal access to high-quality, healthy, safe, and supportive child care environments, providing services to children aged 6 weeks to 13 years of age, or up to 18 years if special supervision is required. Families can apply for the Child Care Assistance Program online through the “Am I Eligible” survey and search for a child care provider in their area through the New Mexico Child Care Finder online tool.

Families FIRST

Families FIRST (Families and Infants Receive Services and Training) is helping build strong families through medical, social, and educational support from registered nurses and resource referrals to promote healthy infants and children in New Mexico. Families First has combined with Home Visiting to form The Family Foundations Bureau. Families FIRST providers work on the following key areas:

- Care coordination services to Medicaid-eligible pregnant individuals
- Conduct ongoing assessments to address holistic needs
- Coordinate resources with family and community
- Educate clients and their families on topics related to their pregnancy and postpartum experience as well as newborn and pediatric topics

See American Indian/Alaska Native (AI/AN) Children Served by Families First, FY25 Table on page 19

Family Nutrition Bureau

Family Nutrition Bureau (FNB) administers two USDA Child Nutrition Programs which provide federal funds to participating institutions to initiate and maintain non-profit food service programs for eligible children and adults. Two programs under FNB include the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) open to all ages and the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP), which serves children aged 1 to 18. Summer Meal sites can be found at: summerfoodnm.org

See Child and Adult Care Food Program ECECN - FNB Table on page 17

FIT Program

The Family Infant Toddler (FIT) Program promotes children growing and developing at their own pace. However, sometimes children have special developmental needs or health concerns that may put them at risk for, or cause, a developmental delay. Early Intervention promotes child development and supports families whose child has, or is at risk for, a developmental delay or disability.

| ***See Total Children Served by County 7-1-2025 to 6-30-2026 Table on page 20***

NM PreK

New Mexico PreK (NM PreK) services are offered in community and school-based settings. NM PreK offers high-quality early education focused on school readiness. NM PreK supports linguistically and culturally appropriate curriculum and provides developmentally appropriate activities for New Mexico children. ECECD welcomed two new Tribal programs as NM PreK providers. The addition of Pueblo of Isleta and Pueblo of San Felipe expanded access for a total of 509 children to high-quality NM PreK services. Collaborative partnerships with Tribal NM PreK programs allow for greater educational sovereignty in the operation of New Mexico PreK classrooms within the context of Tribal education systems. This added flexibility allows individual Nation, Pueblos, and Tribes to tailor the PreK curriculum and standards to the unique needs of their communities. Most of these new Tribal PreK classrooms will be embedded within existing Tribal Head Start programs.

| ***See Tribal Enrollment for New Mexico PreK, FY26 Table on page 18***

Head Start Collaboration Office

The New Mexico Head Start State Collaboration Office (HSSCO) operates as part of a larger national system of state collaboration offices funded by the federal Office of Head Start. The federal government created the system of state Head Start Collaboration Offices to facilitate partnerships between Head Start programs and other state and Tribal early childhood education, child care, and family support services. These offices are particularly important for state administration because Head Start funding is provided from the federal government directly to local Head Start programs and agencies.

Head Start (HS) and Early Head Start (EHS) are a critical part of the Prenatal-to-Five (PN5) early childhood system; working to give vulnerable children an opportunity to succeed in school and life. These federally funded programs throughout the country and in New Mexico make an impact on communities by providing comprehensive educational, emotional, social, health, nutritional, and psychological services that support thriving children and their families.

| ***See FY26 STCA Tribal Head Start HS and EHS Funded Slots Table on page 22***

New Mexico Early Childhood Tribal Advisory Coalition, March 26, 2026 in Ohkay Owingeh, New Mexico.



DATA TABLES

FY26 STCA CCA by Care Type AI/AN Children Served

County	AI/AN CCA Children	% AI/AN CCA Children	Total AI/AN CCA Children 0 - 5 Years Old	% of AI/AN CCA Children 0 - 5 Years Old
Bernalillo	1212	4.82%	614	50.66%
Catron	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
Chaves	9	0.40%	4	44.44%
Cibola	69	20.85%	35	50.72%
Colfax	3	3.13%	1	33.33%
Curry	23	1.32%	13	56.52%
De Baca	1	1.69%	1	100.00%
Dona Ana	86	0.93%	47	54.65%
Eddy	5	0.62%	3	60.00%
Grant	2	0.47%	2	100.00%
Guadalupe	1	0.74%	0	0.00%
Harding	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
Hidalgo	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
Lea	15	0.77%	9	60.00%
Lincoln	8	2.85%	0	0.00%
Los Alamos	1	0.46%	1	100.00%
Luna	2	0.47%	0	0.00%
McKinley	214	58.63%	168	78.50%
Mora	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
Otero	19	0.97%	7	36.84%
Quay	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
Rio Arriba	31	6.61%	13	41.94%
Roosevelt	2	0.38%	2	100.00%
San Juan	1198	40.39%	723	60.35%
San Miguel	4	0.74%	3	75.00%
Sandoval	149	4.47%	102	68.46%
Santa Fe	60	2.99%	31	51.67%
Sierra	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
Socorro	10	4.35%	7	70.00%
Taos	13	2.67%	10	76.92%
Torrance	3	1.12%	1	33.33%
Union	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
Valencia	63	2.75%	34	53.97%
NO COUNTY ON CLIENT ADDRESS	0	0.00%	3	0.00%
Total	3,203	5.45%	1,834	57.26%

Child Care Providers FY26

County	Number of Licensed Centers	Number of Licensed Homes	Number of Registered Homes
Bernalillo	328	111	179
Catron	0	0	0
Chaves	30	14	14
Cibola	6	5	20
Colfax	1	3	4
Curry	18	25	11
De Baca	1	0	1
Dona Ana	99	83	346
Eddy	13	3	10
Grant	12	7	7
Guadalupe	4	0	1
Harding	0	0	0
Hidalgo	1	1	2
Lea	29	7	10
Lincoln	8	2	3
Los Alamos	10	1	1
Luna	10	8	13
McKinley	7	1	99
Mora	0	0	3
Otero	20	21	26
Quay	2	0	2
Rio Arriba	11	1	19
Roosevelt	9	6	4
San Juan	35	1	15
San Miguel	4	8	19
Sandoval	32	13	61
Santa Fe	53	10	16
Sierra	2	0	5
Socorro	7	2	17
Taos	17	3	4
Torrance	6	2	5
Union	0	0	1
Valencia	37	3	33
Grand Total	812	341	951

Child and Adult Care Food Program ECECN - FNB

County	County Code	Center Sponsors	Native American Providers	Native American Participants
Rio Arriba	039	3	5	1
McKinley	031	2	171	284
Cibola	006	3	14	46
Dona Ana	013		0	30
Sandoval	043	6	59	52
Socorro	053	1	14	6
Bernalillo	001		2	18
Taos	055	1	0	
San Miguel	047		0	
Santa Fe	049		0	
Mora	033		0	
Colfax	007		0	1
Grant	017		3	82
Otero	035	1	1	1
Guadalupe	019		0	
Valencia	061	1	0	2
Luna	029		0	
Sierra	051		0	1
Curry	009		2	
San Juan	045	1	7	5
Roosevelt	041		0	
Quay	037		0	
De Baca	011		0	
Torrance	057		0	18
Total			278	547

Tribal Enrollment for New Mexico PreK, FY26

School District	School Based	Community Based	School District	School Based	Community Based	School District	School Based	Community Based
Alamogordo Public Schools	6	8	Gadsden Independent Schools	0	2	Mountainair Public Schools	0	0
Albuquerque Public Schools	117	331	Gallup-Mckinley Cty Schools	310	72	Pecos Independent Schools	1	0
Animas Public Schools	0	0	Grady Municipal Schools	0	0	Penasco Independent Schools	0	1
Artesia Public Schools	0	2	Grants-Cibola County Schools	21	4	Pojoaque Valley Public Schools	8	0
Aztec Municipal Schools	12	21	Hagerman Municipal Schools	0	0	Portales Municipal Schools	0	0
Belen Consolidated Schools	0	1	Hatch Valley Public Schools	0	0	Quemado Independent Schools	1	0
Bernalillo Public Schools	45	3	Hobbs Municipal Schools	4	3	Questa Independent Schools	1	0
Bloomfield Schools	29	8	Hondo Valley Public Schools	0	0	Raton Public Schools	0	0
Capitan Municipal Schools	0	0	House Municipal Schools	0	0	Red River Valley Charter School	0	0
Carlsbad Municipal Schools	11	0	Jal Public Schools	0	0	Reserve Public Schools	0	0
Carrizozo Municipal Schools	0	0	Jemez Mountain Public Schools	6	0	Rio Rancho Public Schools	40	31
Central Consolidated Schools	151	0	Jemez Valley Public Schools	6	0	Roswell Independent Schools	1	0
Chama Valley Indep. Schools	0	0	Lake Arthur Municipal Schools	0	0	Roy Municipal Schools	0	0
Cimarron Municipal Schools	0	0	Las Cruces Public Schools	8	30	Ruidoso Municipal Schools	7	0
Clayton Municipal Schools	1	0	Las Vegas City Public Schools	0	0	San Jon Municipal Schools	0	0
Cloudcroft Municipal Schools	0	0	Lordsburg Municipal Schools	0	0	Santa Fe Public Schools	11	24
Clovis Municipal Schools	5	0	Los Alamos Public Schools	3	0	Santa Rosa Consolidated Schools	0	0
Cobre Consolidated Schools	1	0	Los Lunas Public Schools	15	20	Silver Consolidated Schools	1	4
Cuba Independent Schools	9	0	Loving Municipal Schools	1	0	Socorro Consolidated Schools	0	5
Deming Public Schools	3	0	Magdalena Municipal Schools	6	0	Taos Municipal Schools	2	5
Des Moines Municipal Schools	0	0	Melrose Public Schools	0	0	Tatum Municipal Schools	0	0
Dexter Consolidated Schools	0	0	Mesa Vista Consolidated Schools	0	0	T Or C Municipal Schools	0	0
Dora Municipal Schools	0	0	Mescalero Apache School	0	0	Texico Municipal Schools	0	0
Dulce Independent Schools	14	0	Mission Achievement And Success	0	0	Tucumcari Public Schools	1	0
Elida Municipal Schools	1	0	Mora Independent Schools	0	0	Tularosa Municipal Schools	12	0
Espanola Public Schools	3	10	Moriarty-Edgewood School District	1	5	Vaughn Municipal Schools	0	0
Estancia Municipal Schools	1	0	Mosquero Municipal Schools	0	0	Wagon Mound Public Schools	0	0
Eunice Municipal Schools	1	0				West Las Vegas Public Schools	0	0
Farmington Municipal Schools	70	305				Zuni Public Schools	13	0
Floyd Municipal Schools	0	0						
Fort Sumner Municipal Schools	1	0						

School Based Total 961

Community Based Total 895

Grand Total 1,856

Families FIRST Clients Served in FY26 by Race and County

Race: American Indian or Alaska Native

County	Distinct Clients Served
Bernalillo	14
Cibola	<10
Curry	<10
Dona Ana	12
Eddy	<10
Grant	<10
Lincoln	<10
Los Alamos	<10
McKinley	41
Otero	<10
Other	<10
Quay	<10
Rio Arriba	18
Roosevelt	<10
San Juan	23
San Miguel	<10
Sandoval	20
Santa Fe	15
Sierra	<10
Socorro	<10
Taos	<10
Taos	<10
Union	<10
Valencia	<10
Grand Total	202

Race: All

County	Distinct Clients Served
Bernalillo	707
Catron	<10
Chaves	267
Cibola	27
Colfax	35
Curry	221
De Baca	<10
Dona Ana	1095
Eddy	226
Grant	76
Guadalupe	18
Harding	<10
Hidalgo	<10
Lea	360
Lincoln	61
Los Alamos	<10
Luna	129
McKinley	81
Mora	<10

County	Distinct Clients Served
Otero	245
Other	72
Out of State	15
Quay	27
Rio Arriba	106
Roosevelt	87
San Juan	73
San Miguel	69
Sandoval	156
Santa Fe	319
Sierra	34
Socorro	56
Taos	83
Torrance	15
Union	<10
Valencia	103
Grand Total	4800

Total Family Infant Toddler (FIT) Program Served by County 7-1-2025 to 6-30-2026

Includes break out of American Indian and Alaskan Native Children Served

County	Total Children Served	American Indian and Alaskan Native Children Served
Bernalillo	3,899	303
Catron	19	-
Chaves	683	< 10
Cibola	153	81
Colfax	42	< 10
Curry	646	12
De Baca	6	-
Dona Ana	3,807	26
Eddy	507	14
Grant	307	< 10
Guadalupe	13	< 10
Harding	1	-
Hidalgo	55	-
Lea	675	< 10
Lincoln	68	< 10
Los Alamos	112	< 10
Luna	402	< 10
McKinley	422	345
Mora	10	-
Otero	527	64
Other	31	23
Quay	47	< 10
Rio Arriba	310	33
Roosevelt	162	< 10
San Juan	820	427
San Miguel	98	< 10
Sandoval	855	137
Santa Fe	847	33
Sierra	141	< 10
Socorro	110	22
Taos	128	14
Torrance	70	< 10
Union	15	< 10
Valencia	462	29
Grand Total FY26	16,450	1,603
% Increase from FY25	1.44%	2.89%

Home Visiting STCA FY26 07-01-2025 thru 06-30-2026

County	AI/AN Served	All HV Children Served
No County Assigned	<10	107
Bernalillo County	68	1,346
Catron County	0	<10
Chaves County	0	388
Cibola County	38	149
Colfax County	0	88
Curry County	0	357
De Baca County	0	<10
Dona Ana County	<10	2,367
Eddy County	0	93
Grant County	<10	298
Guadalupe County	0	23
Harding County	0	0
Hidalgo County	0	74
Lea County	<10	642
Lincoln County	<10	134
Los Alamos County	<10	211
Luna County	<10	419
McKinley County	247	353
Mora County	0	23
Otero County	10	200
Quay County	<10	66
Rio Arriba County	<10	135
Roosevelt County	<10	148
San Juan County	83	190
San Miguel County	<10	107
Sandoval County	18	112
Santa Fe County	11	635
Sierra County	<10	400
Socorro County	41	193
Taos County	<10	186
Torrance County	0	11
Union County	0	16
Valencia County	12	229
Total children	528	9,700

FY26 STCA Tribal Head Start HS and EHS Funded Slots

Grantee	County	Head Start Funded	Early Head Start Funded
Alamo Navajo School Board, Inc.	Socorro	54	40
Eight Northern Indian Pueblos Council, Inc.	Santa Fe	36	0
Five Sandoval Indian Pueblos, Inc.	Sandoval	41	0
Pueblo of Isleta	Bernalillo	87	48
Laguna Department of Education	Cibola	100	32
Mescalero Apache Tribe	Otero	120	0
Native American Professional Parent Resources INC.	Bernalillo	0	72
Navajo Nation Tribal Government	McKinley, Sandoval, San Juan	393	93
Ohkay Owingeh Tribal Council	Rio Arriba	47	0
Pueblo of Acoma	Cibola	72	0
Pueblo of Jemez	Sandoval	51	0
Ramah Navajo School Board Inc	Cibola, McKinley	60	0
Pueblo of San Felipe	Sandoval	96	0
Pueblo of Santa Clara	Rio Arriba	38	0
Pueblo of Santo Domingo	Sandoval	119	94
Pueblo of Taos	Taos	36	14
Pueblo of Zuni	McKinley	153	0
Grand Total		1,503	393

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Pictured: Dancers from Te Tsu Geh Oweengeh Community School and the Pueblo of Tesuque Early Childhood.



**Native American
Early Education and Care**

Government-to-Government

Spring 2026

Moving Forward Together: State–Tribal Priorities

Transition Focus Areas

1. Investing in Early Childhood Native Language Efforts

ECECD recognizes that Native language efforts have always been led by the Nations, Pueblos, and Tribes (NPTs). The Department's role is to align resources in ways that honor and strengthen this work—not direct it—by supporting early childhood strategies that reflect each NPT's vision for its children, language, and future.

ECECD is investing in early learning environments where Native language, culture, and identity are present from the earliest years. These investments support language immersion models, and intergenerational learning that connects young children with language keepers and cultural leaders.

Sustained investment is critical, and the next administration must prioritize Native language efforts—ensuring children are rooted in language and culture, families remain connected to tradition, and communities continue leading this work forward.

2. Protecting and Expanding Universal Child Care for Native Families

New Mexico's first-in-the-nation Universal Child Care (UCC) initiative is expanding access for Native children and families by removing cost barriers and broadening eligibility. UCC increases participation in Native early childhood programs while aligning with Tribal systems through coordination with tribally-determined implementation.

Ongoing and expanded investment in UCC is critical. The next administration must prioritize UCC to improve outcomes for young children, and reduce costs for families, and drive long-term economic stability for Tribal early childhood systems.

Transition Focus Areas Continued

3. Growing a Well-Compensated, Credentialed Early Childhood Workforce

ECECD has made targeted investments to strengthen the Native early childhood workforce through scholarships, higher education partnerships, and culturally-grounded career pathways. These efforts include expanding multilingual pathways and increasing the number of Native language educators.

These investments are strengthening workforce stability and expanding access to culturally and linguistically-grounded early childhood services for Native children and families.

Scaling this progress is not optional—it requires continued investment. Building on \$7 million in workforce investments and 243 scholarships awarded, the next administration must prioritize bilingual incentives and expand cohort-based investments to build and retain a strong Native educator workforce.

4. Deepening Government-to-Government Partnership and Tribal Engagement

New Mexico has made important progress in expanding consultation and strengthening collaboration with the NPTs. Continuing to deepen this government-to-government approach will be essential to ensuring that early childhood systems remain responsive, coordinated, and grounded in Tribal priorities.

Ongoing commitment to frequent, meaningful consultation must remain a priority. Sustaining and expanding the use of Intergovernmental Agreements (IGAs) is a key strategy for successful outcomes. These agreements provide a flexible and proven pathway for state funding resources to meet Tribally-defined needs.

The New Mexico Early Childhood Tribal Advisory Coalition ensures consistent engagement, elevates Native voices statewide, and advances coordinated systems that deliver measurable outcomes for Native children and families.





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